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On the Way to Houston

Mildred Emory Persinger

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Title

On the way to Houston

Sheet No.

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article

YWCA members will be participating in the National Women's Conference November 18-21 in Houston as leaders, as delegates, as observers and as guests from abroad. In fact, YWCA involvement continues to mount in the IWY Commission's program of 56 state and territorial meetings on women's issues to culminate in the adoption of a U.S. Women's Plan of Action at Houston.

Key to the smooth running of the conference, expected to draw thousands of observers in addition to the 2,000 delegates and alternates, is a vast local support system, the Houston Arrangements Committee chaired by Houston YWCA board member and former president, Mary Keegan. IWY Commissioner and YWCA National Board UN Representative, at a Commission meeting in Houston noted that the Commission had sought a leader of demonstrated organizing skill who could work in mutual trust and respect with all sectors of the community. Other YWCA volunteers have undertaken some of the tasks that helped them make the 1970 YWCA convention one of the greats in YWCA history.

Chairperson Keegan and her committee, which reflects Houston's rich and colorful diversity, will have their hands full. The bold experiment in open

The bold experiment in bringing truly representative women together for discussion and open elections, designed by women legislators and partially financed by a unique Act of Congress, has indeed produced an airing of every facet of opinion in the state and territorial meetings held this year. Elected delegates will carry predictable conflicts in attitudes and goals to the National Conference.

Contributing to the atmosphere for dialogue will be the warm welcome the committee, including Mary Keegan and her committee are planning for Conference participants and the logistical support necessary to facilitate discussion of highly controversial questions. Committee members are helping with public relations, official liaison, fundraising and hospitality to international guests. They will supervise such details as registration, microphone monitoring, messages, information and the innumerable functions which ~~some of the same functions~~ can make or break a large meeting.

Local distribution of tickets for the "gala" being planned by Commissioner Jean Stapleton and her committee may be one of the diplomatic problems confronting the Houston Arrangements Committee. But there will be plenty of room at the women's sports events being planned for residents from Seneca Falls, N.Y. where the last national women's meeting was held in 1948, to Houston may see the torch going by, which will

Vicepresident.

Mildred Persinger

Houston

featuring women
track stars

be carried by women runners along the way. It has been suggested that Commission Chair, Bella Abzug, in her hat, run the last 20 feet.

Perhaps the most difficult problem the committee ~~will~~ faces is the imponderable number for whom arrangements must be made. Observers who come will find a smorgesborg of events: ~~a~~ hearing by members of Congress on issues of peace and disarmament, discussion by international observers of their impressions of U.S. women's activities, strategy sessions on how to achieve the goals the Conference will recommend, films, music, showings ~~of~~ by women artists, exhibits by organizations including the YWCA, rap sessions, caucuses and demonstrations. But how many chairs and how many beds?

To assure that these necessities will be available, persons intending to participate in the ~~parallel activities and~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ should write to the Office of the National Commission for IWY, IWY/D, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. Those who may not be going may wish to arrange with local television stations to provide full coverage and may even wish to hold meetings at the times for viewing.

Whether or not the recommendations the National Women's Conference makes to President Carter and the Congress are to be implemented will depend on the support of U.S. women. YWCAs are already deeply involved in working for ~~ax~~ justice for all women. ~~xxxxxxThexxxxxxthisxxxxxx~~ Some will be using this occasion to spread the YWCA message ~~and the YWCA~~ that justice is indivisible ~~and the YWCA~~ in an interdependent society and interdependent world, essentially the message of the UN Decade for Women which the Houston ~~xxx~~ conference launches in the United States.

speeches by VIPs,

*the testimony to
be offered by
women experts
in strategy
and arms
control;*

D/way

*offer
for preservation*

discussion

people

*their participation
in the Houston
conference*

YWCA involvement in the ~~program~~ government-sponsored program leading to the U.S. National Women's Conference November 18-21 continues to ^(See YWCA Interscholastic) expected to draw thousands ~~xxx~~ to Houston mount. Key to the success of the Conference, ~~in Houston~~ ^{is the} performance of the ~~local~~ ^a vast local support system, ~~This is the~~ ^{Houston} Houston Arrangements Committee, chaired by a YWCA Board member and former president, Mary Keegan.

National IYW Commissioner Mildred Persinger, ~~who~~ ^{at a meeting of the Commission held in Houston last summer} participated in the ~~Commission's~~ selection noted that the ~~primary consideration~~ demonstrated organizing skill was only one of the qualities the ~~Commission sought~~ ^{the Commission sought} for this all-important post. Equally important be able to work in mutual trust and respect with all sectors of the ~~was that she have the confidence of all sectors of the community.~~ community

National IYW Commissioner Mildred Persinger, the YWCA National Board's ~~UN Representative,~~ ^{who} ~~participated in the selection,~~ ^{at a meeting of the Commission held in Houston last summer} noted that the Commission ~~was seeking~~ ^{had sought} a leader of demonstrated organizing skill who ~~also~~ could work in mutual trust and respect with all sectors of the ~~community.~~ ^{volunteers} Other YWCA members, she added, have volunteered ~~to perform~~ ^{undertaken} some of the ~~services~~ ^{various} that ~~made~~ ^{helped} the 1970 Houston YWCA National Convention one of the ~~most~~ ^{greatest} ~~beautifully~~ ^{conventions} ~~run~~ in YWCA history.

Arrangements Chairperson ~~Mary Keegan~~ ^{which reflects} ~~and her committee,~~ ^{drawn from the} ~~diversity of Houston's~~ ^{major} ~~population~~ ^{issues} Houston's rich cultural and colorful diversity', will have their hands full. The bold experiment in ~~complete openness~~ ^{open} ~~discussion~~ ^{discussion} and open elections, ~~where~~ ^{federal} ~~mandated by a unique piece~~ of legislation, has indeed produced an airing of every conceivable shade of opinion on the ~~major~~ ^{major} issues women have identified in 56 state and territorial meetings held this year.